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ABSTRACT

A theory of culture change is offered as a foundation for reorganization of curriculums of general education and interdisciplinary study. Broadly humanistic in character, the theory's aim is to make possible a genuine integration of concepts in such disciplines as literature, art history, philosophy, psychology, political theory and history, sociology, and history of science and economics. The theory centers on "man the creator" in the broadest sense: on the conscious and nonconscious productive processes by which man makes his history and continually recreate himself and his environment. The relations between creation and the consciousness of creation and between creativity and the consciousness of creativity and the interplay between the works of creative individuals and their environments are explored in a theory which, because the very essence of this interplay is continual change, has to be both dynamic and historical, with a focus on changing attitudes toward creation and on the interrelated factor of changing styles. (MF)

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OUTLINE OF A GENERAL THEORY OF CULTURE CHANGE

Programs of general education and interdisciplinary study have been organized up to now primarily as pedagogical enterprises. By this I mean that they are normally the work of groups of faculty in different areas putting their heads together and offering curricular collages. If these programs are to take root and grow, the pedagogical enterprise will have to be grounded in an intellectual project. What I'm about to sketch out is a rough example of one way to go about starting such a project. I begin with a general theory of culture change intended to serve as the foundation for a reorganization of the curriculum as well as an entry into different fields of study. The theory is broadly humanistic in character, and its aim is to make possible a genuine integration of fields and concepts across the so-called divisions of humanities and social sciences. At the same time, the theory does not ignore or override the necessary uniqueness of each discipline; its purpose is to articulate and sustain the different disciplinary methods and objectives while grounding them in a common theoretical point of origin. Ideally, the theory ought to generate sequences of subjects and areas according to a basic intellectual plan or method; ideally, also, the concepts, structure, and development of this plan or method should reflect recent research over a fairly wide range of fields of inquiry. Before beginning, I want to emphasize one fact: this project makes no claim to universality; it isn't the best of all possible plans, the ideal plan, and so forth. It's merely an instance, one of a number of possible plans--there will be as many plans as there are planners--and I offer it in the hope of opening up (rather than closing down) an area of study which may take many forms.

My particular interest is the theory and practice of interpretation in humanities and social sciences, and my aim--to state it in a slightly different way--is to provide a new setting within which modes of interpretation in a variety of disciplines may proceed along their separate paths yet contribute to a unified cultural inquiry. I have in mind such disciplines as literature, art history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, political theory and history, history of institutions, history of science, and economic history. I consider these disciplines to be so many branches growing from the trunk of the general theory. And all I can do at this time is give a rough account of some of the roots of the theory.

My theory centers on man the creator in the broadest sense: on the conscious and nonconscious productive processes by which man makes his history, and by which he continually re-creates himself and his environment. I'm interested in exploring the relations between creation and the consciousness of creation, between creativity and the consciousness of creativity; and further, in exploring these relations within a particular context, namely, the interplay between the works of creative individuals and their

environments. Because the very essence of this interplay is continual change, the theory has to be dynamic and historical. It has to focus on changing attitudes toward creation, and on the interrelated factor of changing styles.

For the sake of convenience, I'm going to set up a dynamic field of cultural change by contrasting two hypothetical attitudes toward creation. These attitudes are necessarily pure caricature, so it doesn't matter what I call them, but I'll use the terms traditional and modern to indicate that, generally speaking, one precedes and generates the other. I begin with some statements of the modern attitude, since my own theory clearly finds its home there, and this will enable me to identify my limited perspective or frame of reference.

"Men make their own history," Marx declared, "but they do not make it just as they please; they make it under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past." In Sartre's reformulation of this passage, man "is at once both the product of his own product [i.e., history] and a historical agent who can under no circumstances be taken as a product." For if "men make their history on the basis of real, prior conditions," nevertheless "it is the men who make it and not the prior conditions. Otherwise men would be merely the vehicles of inhuman forces which through them would govern the social world." Sartre is here preserving what he considers Marx's true activist or existentialist orientation from Neo-Marxist determinism. But the antithesis illustrates the more general distinction I want to make between traditional and modern attitudes toward human creation. The modern emphasis is on man the creator, homo faber, in the most radical sense of man as "a world-constructor" and of human existence as, "ab initio, an ongoing externalization. As man externalizes himself [through creation], he constructs the world into which he externalizes himself. In the process of externalization, he projects his own meanings into reality."

The traditional attitude differs from this radical modern view, as the following description shows:

> Typically, the real relationship between man and his world is reversed in consciousness. Man, the producer of a world, is apprehended as its product. . . . Human meanings are no longer understood as world-producing but as being, in their turn, products of the "nature of things". . . . Even while apprehending the world in reified terms [reified = "thingified," things made "by nature" rather than by man], man continues to produce it. That is, man is capable of producing a reality that denies him.

I would prefer to revise the next to last sentence, and paraphrase it as follows: "Because he apprehends the world as something he didn't produce ('in reified terms'), man is enabled to continue producing it." I think I would also like to add something to the last

sentence, which now reads, "man is capable of producing a reality that denies him." I'd like to add its reciprocal: "man is capable of denying that he produces the reality which in fact he produces"; and further, "capable of denying it so that he may go on producing it." These changes introduce elements of preference and value, and take the question out of the realm of pure determinism. The elements of value affect man's attitude both towards creation and towards reality. On the one hand, man has an impulse to creativity which is so basic that under certain conditions he may have to ignore or deny his awareness of the impulse and its products in order to continue its exercise. On the other hand, these conditions are imposed by a premise fundamental to the traditional attitude toward reality: man denies that he produces reality because it would not appear to be reality if he saw it as his product.

The traditional attitude is defined by its commitment to the notion that nothing which is experienced as produced by living man--whether or not he actually did produce it--can be placed unconditionally in the category of the real, i.e., the forces and structures that cause or underlie the existence of the world and its creatures. Reality is by definition that which owes its origins to creative forces other than and generally transcending man. The real is in that sense the given, the transcendent. Conversely, for the traditional attitude, any overtly human product which would be validated as real must be viewed as deriving its essential idea or form from some source transcending the actual human creator. In the traditional hierarchy of creators, nature and divinity outrank man, the collectivity (society, tribe, culture) outranks the individual, the ancestral dead and the authority of the past outrank living contemporaries. While both the traditional and the modern attitudes provide--and must provide--sanctions for human creativity, the traditional attitude places more restrictions on man's freedom to acknowledge the extent of his creative power and the range of its products. It thus entails the need to ignore or deny, or to displace from consciousness, the purely human origin of many things which the modern attitude openly accepts as manmade. This means that the traditional attitude depends much more than the modern attitude on nonconscious creation, since obviously the products of nonconscious creation are more easily ascribed to transcendent sources than the products of conscious creation.

The extent to which transcendent realities have been nonconsciously produced by man may be suggested by the following considerations. (a) Consider first such processes or entities as galaxies, birth, death, weather, planets, mountains, evolution, gravitation, and cosmic dust. These appear to us to be unconditionally transcendent, even though in some respects they have been and can be altered by men. But they are clearly different from other forms of transcendence which are conditioned by either (b) psyche or (c) culture. (b) Structures in and of the world which we normally experience as transcendent in origin may in fact derive from behavioral, perceptual, physiological, and cognitive processes: e.g., space, time, objects, and the various categories

and relations in which they are perceptually ordered. (c) Other apparently transcendent structures owe their characters primarily to cultural conditioning: the cosmos, the natural and social orders, and the architecture of kinship. (d) Still others seem to owe their characters to varying combinations of psychic, perceptual, and cultural influence: e.g., linguistic capability and language systems; the divisions of time; immortality; gods, spirits, and, in general, transcendent presences along with their sacred or numinous settings in nature and society. Thus the traditional premise that reality is by definition transcendent, that man is the creature of transcendent forces, and that his experience is shaped by transcendent structures--this premise is oddly skewed by the modern insight that many things traditionally ascribed to natural or divine creators were actually the work of nonconscious human processes.

I shall use the word transposition to refer to the processes which, in (b), (c), and (d) above, produce conditionally transcendent structures. I define transposition as nonconscious transfer of structures from man to world such that they appear to be transcendent elements in and of the world. I use the term nonconscious because I don't want to restrict transposition to unconscious or subconscious activity in the limited psychological sense. Projection is one form of psychic transposition, which is in turn only one form of transposition. Cultural transposition, for example, produces its conditionally transcendent forms (cosmos, kinship, social structure) in a manner external to the processes and functions of individual psyches, or of psyche as a generic biological category. Because the products of transposition do not originate in consciousness, they appear as external, and as creatures of some creator other than man.

Complementary to transposition are consciously directed productive processes, or techniques. The term technology, extended beyond its normal range, may be used to refer to the sum total of human techniques: all arts and skills of mind or hand--crafts, philosophy, music, law, commerce, war, art, etc.--and all activities aimed at affecting economic, social, and political conditions. Technology is opposed to transposition as conscious to nonconscious creation. Both are opposed to transcendence as human to nonhuman creation so long as the concept of transcendence locates the criterion of reality in nonhuman genesis. This is the case in the traditional, but not in the modern, attitude.

Transcendence, transposition, and technology: these three terms comprise the basic definitions of the general theory. Each of them is fairly complex, and may be unpacked at considerable length. (The theory of transposition, for example, is multilinear, and it takes me several chapters to distinguish, analyze, and illustrate the various modes of transposition--perceptual, psychic, cultural, and psycho-cultural.) But the terms can also be compressed and simplified, as I have tried to do above, so that they may lend themselves more readily to dialectical interplay, and to

the development of some general axioms of culture change. I don't have time to get very far into the dynamic phases of the theory, nor to illustrate it in any detail. But I would like at least to suggest how the three terms may be put into play, and in order to do this, I want first to sharpen the distinction between traditional and modern attitudes, and then to chart the historical dynamics by which one is transformed into the other.

The attitudes may be clearly distinguished by their contrasting assumptions about the world. The total human environment at any given time is a mixture of conditionally and unconditionally transcendent elements; a mixture also of nonconsciously and consciously manmade elements. From the modern standpoint, the whole appears to be a construct, something put together by man. From the traditional standpoint, the whole appears as something given to man by those forces which (or who) created man as part of the whole. This can be put another way, using the commonplace notion of world view (Weltanschauung): In the traditional attitude, the world is prior to any world view, and contains all world views, entertained by man; a world view is simply a view of the transcendent world, an image, representation, model, or theory whose validity depends on its accurate correspondence to the original. And in some versions of traditional attitude, the world is the one physico-spiritual universe organized into a cosmos which integrates diverse interrelated orders and zones. Men receive some information about this world through perception, some through action, some from traditional sources of authority, some through insight, philosophy, vision, and revelation. But in the modern attitude, any such cosmos is either itself a world view rather than the world, or else it is one of a number of possible worlds which are all different from each other, and which all together may constitute a comprehensive world view.

A world view in modern thought contains a diversity of worlds or universes. It is at once a manmade perspective on reality and a configuration of reality. The physical universe is only one of the worlds in this configuration. And even this universe is not given to man as a unity: perception reveals one universe, science another; quantum physics isolates one universe, relativity physics another, Newtonian physics still another; the expanding universe implies one cosmic configuration, the steady state universe another. Furthermore, we speak of the universe of physics, the universe of biology, the universe of culture, the universe of art, the social universe, the natural universe, etc. We speak generally of "universes of discourse." These are all considered as autonomous if overlapping systems, and they are explicitly understood as constructs of human thought or action rather than as experiential givens.

A convenient model for this situation--and also an outcome of it--is the organization of academic disciplines. "Physics," "history," "sociology," and "mathematics," each refers to a complex that includes subject matter, modes and methods of inquiry, and a department of specialists. The elements of this complex

together constitute a perspective in terms of which a particular universe of experience is selectively apprehended. Each perspective is a grid filtering human experience, sorting it out into organized worlds or world views--the distinction between world and world view now fades. All these complexes, and their universes, are the products of technology in the broad sense. Outside the academy, the various orders that structure public life seem to be similarly organized: the economic, the social, the political, and the cultural "spheres" of our existence are as so many systems or grids which, although they overlap in often confusing ways, are clearly distinguishable. Each has its own institutions, officials, experts, and machinery. Each is a technology unto itself, and may be said to owe its character largely to technical developments of the last four to six hundred years. Finally, these universes are neither more nor less "real" than the actual world constituted for man by perception; and they are neither more nor less real than each other. All are separate and equal; none has ontological priority over any other; the world caught in each perspective--astronomy, art, politics, biology--is the real world for that perspective, but it is not identical with the reality of any other universe. A world view may be a "multiverse" which includes a set of universes relatable in a variety of ways, and these universes may exist in a variety of modes--actual, possible, hypothetical.

This contrast between traditional and modern attitudes may be re-stated in the following terms: for the former, the world is total reality, and is transcendent in that it owes its being and structure to transcendent creative forces. Any acknowledged human contribution to that reality is secondary and subordinate. Man's technical processes are validated in so far as they are responsive to the structure and demands of that reality, in so far as they "imitate" natural processes, in so far as they serve or reflect or articulate the prior orders of the world. The world views of Plato, Aristotle, Vergil, Gnosticism, Gospel Christianity, the Tangu of New Guinea, the Azande of Central Africa, the Scholastic Middle Ages: these all exemplify the influence of traditional criteria based on a commitment to transcendence over technology, or to transcendence vs. technology (i.e., to the belief that technology cannot produce transcendent realities).

A more explicitly modern view of the traditional commitment modifies it by adding the factor of transposition: We see that this commitment is to a real world whose total form is the product of multiple transpositions. In the case of conceptions of the cosmos, it doesn't matter whether or not a particular world picture was consciously invented by one or a number of intellectuals. What matters is how it was injected into the mainstream of culture--whether it was received as a reflection of reality, was transmitted as the true image and validated as the traditional account. We can identify products of cultural transposition by their structure, their function, and their transcendent status, but we can make very few informed guesses about the technical or transpositional mode of

their actual origins. What seems more important is that traditional views of the world always ascribe its genesis to transcendent creators. Thus we add to the criteria of the traditional attitude not only an overt commitment to transcendence but also a covert reliance on transposition. Traditional man produces or alters reality through nonconscious creation, but not through conscious creation. And he is capable of producing reality only if he can ignore this capability so that he can validate it and continue producing it. To the extent that he recognizes the mark of his thought and hand on the cosmos, he jeopardizes its transcendence, and hence its reality.

For the modern attitude, world as total reality = world view, and is overtly a product of technology. Transcendence of origin is no longer the necessary test of reality. Some realities, and some real systems, in any world view or universe are unconditionally produced by transcendent forces. But they receive form and meaning only as elements in one or another consciously developed universe. No doubt there is a total reality which is unconditionally transcendent, but for the modern attitude much of it is neutral or inert, much of it has receded beyond the horizons and frontiers of experience, and in any case it is no longer congruent with the total reality, the set of universes, which man has constructed around himself. Furthermore, the modern attitude has developed partly through its discovery and criticism of the function of transposition in traditional thought. The criterion of transcendent origin has been largely discredited because it was founded to such an extent on transposition. And in modern life the role of cultural transposition tends to be reduced to its basis in cultural transmission, whose influence derives chiefly from the fact that patterns of cultural change unfold on a scale much larger than the scale of individual life, and at a tempo much slower than the tempo of individual life (yet on a smaller scale and at a quicker tempo in modern than in traditional culture). Institutional and cosmic structures which are the acknowledged products of human technology acquire reality through cultural transmission as well as through their own intransigence.

This discussion suggests that when we speak of the world, the whole, total reality, the total human environment, etc., we have to speak at the same time of the particular form of cultural consciousness which apprehends the world and gives shape to it. The world continually changes through history, and this is a function of the changes of cultural attitude. The two are reciprocal and interdependent aspects of a single historical process. This process may be analyzed by constructing a hypothetical sequence which centers on the changing interplay of my three basic terms. I begin with the postulate that transposition and technology are modes of adaptation in man's struggle for existence. Since man is not God, and is far from controlling the powers of the world, transcendence in its unconditioned form--the transcendence of raw nature--is a brute fact:

> Man is born into a world in which there are some objects and processes which are to him fully comprehensible and others which are not. When he releases his hold on a stone which he has held in his hand and it falls to the ground, the result is always the same, and there is nothing to excite any feeling of dependence on unknown forces. Birth, however, and growth and sexual relations and death and success in fishing or hunting or agriculture are all matters in which man is not his own master and appears to be dealing with something uncanny. This distinction is fundamental, and we can observe it in the behavior of animals. Where man differs from animals--so far as we yet know--is that throughout as much of his evolution as is known to us he has normally not remained supine but has striven to take a positive attitude and assume a definite line of conduct toward these mysteries. What he says and does rests on the assumption that the secret workings of nature are capable of being influenced by his actions, and commonly on the further assumption that these secret workings are due to forces which operate in virtue of wills and emotions comparable with those which prompt his own operations.

In this view, forces which are unknown, uncanny, and mysterious are domesticated into transcendent presences--man-like powers capable of being influenced by human action in agricultural, predatory, and ritual techniques. Man restructures brute nature by transforming its blank features to a source of recognition and communication. The creature asserts and controls his creaturehood by choosing his creators and masters, by exalting them, by demanding them to recognize their mastery and fulfill their godly responsibilities to their human thrall. The traditional attitude is formed when technology is still in its rudimentary stages, and this means that transposition is necessarily the dominant adaptive mode by which primitive man transforms his environment so as to be able to cope with it more adequately. Transposition establis[illegible] the form and context of reality within which traditional techni[illegible]s receive their particular characters and functions.

Following this rationale, we may assume that in the early or primitive stages of any cultural sequence, all institutions will be legitimized as real--transcendent in origin--and will in consequence be conceived as unalterable. For example, political authority and social order will be embedded in the order of nature, which will include divine powers and presences. All techniques--hunting, agriculture, crafts, medicine, ritual, and economics--will similarly be embedded in, inextricably intermingled with, magical or religious practices. These practices will be generated by the character of the existing body of transpositions, the body which comprises the transcendent cosmos for that culture. Given a poor technology and an unpredictable, poorly understood world, the forces important to survival will appear charged with vibrant and dangerous transcendence. Culture establishes communication with those forces by transposing onto them the somewhat more controllable and positive aspects of presences who are aware of man, listen to him, reward

and punish him, and demand from him certain kinds of behavior and action. On this transpositional basis, man develops a religious technology--ritual and magical practices accompanied by mythic and cosmological accounts--in order to harness and respond actively to those restructured forces.

As human techniques develop, the burden of adaptation slowly shifts from transposition to technology. And as this takes place, the evidence of technical human mastery becomes more conspicuous: the acknowledged works of men begin to fill the landscape. The traditional attitude is sustained, but since its relation to its situation changes, it must be continually reformulated in order to appropriate and validate a growing technology. For example, architectural, political, economic, proto-scientific, and speculative techniques are developed and legitimized in the name of transcendent authority. Political authority and institutions ascribe their sources of being and power to the gods, nature, the cosmos, or the ancestors.

The traditional attitude, then, is not monolithic, but undergoes necessary changes throughout the history of any cultural sequence. These changes spring from the effect of growing technology on the existing body of transpositions. Among the more important consequences are the cultural sophistication that accompanies the fact and the evidence of increased technological mastery; and, as a corollary of this, the development of a critical attitude toward aspects of the transcendent world which seem obsolete, no longer compelling or significant. As a result, previously established realities become relegated to the status of anthropomorphic projections. Thus technology comes to jeopardize transcendence--the transcendence produced by old transpositions--and it generates a cultural need for new sources of transcendence, i.e., new or revised transpositions.

This problem may be illustrated by contrasting the following two traditional statements. The first is a flat assertion: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The second is more argumentative: "It is enough for the Christian to believe that the only cause of all created things, whether heavenly or earthly, whether invisible or visible, is the Goodness of the Creator, the one true God; and that nothing exists that does not derive its existence from Him." Both are traditional statements, but the second reveals more openly the pressure of sentiments which may question the belief and which must be dealt with. The speaker--St. Augustine--may well be arguing with himself, and especially with those elements of his psyche which are responsive to the glories of Roman culture. For the most significant historical factor in the difference between the two statements is the development of human technological culture to its ancient apex in the civilization of Greece and Rome. St. Augustine responds to the better (and sometimes to the worse) features of the City of Man. He seems always on the verge of recognizing that the ascription of creativity to God is the only way to validate man's desire and intention to

continue his own self-fulfilling creative activities. And in this he exemplifies the dilemma which technology poses for a traditional culture:

Rome was in its essence a conspicuously manmade civilization, marked by man's thought and technology in all its features. Hence its failure appeared to many Romans to be the failure of the City of Man. A long and venerable history of apparently growing human power, the full flowering of neolithic and classical technology had been revealed as, converted into, a blind alley. The ancient transpositions had dissolved to a vapor, a rumor, a memory evoking either the flaccid gestures of a mannered nostalgia for the golden age, or the nascent yearning of mystery cults for new forms of transcendence. But the spirit of Rome was too firmly and finely articulated to be left behind, "forgotten," overturned by a genuine return to primitivism.

If Christianity began as a popular and countercultural movement, it developed over the centuries into a sophisticated technological culture--in its institutional forms and politics no less than in its law, theology, philosophy, religion, and art. Its problem was therefore twofold: 1) How to restore transcendence, create new heaven and new earth, without recourse to systems of transposition which had been discredited by the cultural failure of Rome--discredited also in the sense that they had been revealed as transpositions, the creations of man? 2) How to sustain the new forms of transcendence on a base whose growing technological character became more and more conspicuous during the high and late middle ages? Christianity met these problems by the most elaborate varieties of displacement, ascribing to God the exercise and products of human creative activity. By displacement, transcendence was conferred on the organization of the Church, the structure and function of the priesthood and the sacraments, the ceremonies and rhetoric in terms of which feudal and seignorial relations were sustained, and the claims made by centuries of scriptural interpreters that their often eccentric, ingenious, and strained interpretations were images or amplifications of the divine Word. In all these instances, the awareness of human creativity or self-assertion--collective as well as individual--was close to the surface of medieval traditionalism, and had continually to be displaced. This psychic displacement--what Sartre has called "bad faith"--was the condition that made possible the continuance of man's tacit faith in his own creative power, the thinly veiled power through which medieval Christianity created and modified what it carefully presupposed as gifts of God. Hence the cultural attitudes of the Renaissance and Reformation developed partly through criticizing this displacement in the same manner in which early Christians criticized the religious transpositions of the pagans. Renaissance more openly proclaimed what could no longer be avoided, namely, that men did make their own history and their world, that they must recognize and affirm this power as ceded to man by God. From this awareness arose the new transcendence: the Reformation God who draws simultaneously closer to man and farther away from him; a God more intimate in the creative visits of the

Holy Spirit and more distant, more awful in the predestining Father.

The modern attitude thus arose in reaction to the traditional attitude, and in response to historical changes which placed before men's eyes the radical creative power of human technology and the more radical (because covert) power of transposition. Looking back we see that in making their history men have made their transcendences and their realities as well. Men have discovered and articulated the role played by transposition, have come to realize to what extent the transcendent world is a human product. And if reality as experienced by man has been largely shaped by transposition, why not by technology too?

The insight that technology can produce transcendence springs not only from the positive joy in the Renaissance discovery of man's godlike power. It is also forced on us by the darker lesson of scientific and historical technology, namely, that man too easily becomes the creature of his own creations. We perceive man as the creator through transposition of culture, of kinship, of cosmos, and of the social order. And we perceive men as technicians who have created the market economy, political systems, corporate industry, and the processes by which we transform the natural environment. Yet most men seem unable to share in the management of these creations, or in their benefits. By their complexity, by their persistence, by their unforeseen effects on life, and by their never fully controlled or predictable changes, these structures and their historical development come to seem no less independent of man, perhaps no less inexorable, than the laws of nature. Products of conscious technique, they impose themselves on men as if they were forces of nature. Man, who perceives himself as the creator of his realities and transcendences is nevertheless helpless before the products not merely of transposition but of his conscious productive processes. Thus, for better or for worse, the modern attitude finds itself committed to technology as a source of structures which assume the status of transcendent realities.

This doesn't of course mean the end of transposition. We always transpose, we are fated as members of the human species to transpose, and we never know where our next transposition is coming from or in what our present transpositions consist. (For example, the critique of perception which has been going on since the sixteenth century does not alter the way we perceive. Naive perceptual consciousness doggedly persists in experiencing its objects and its world as transcendent in spite of sophisticated remonstrances from all quarters that perception is active and creative, and that the world it gives us is much more largely the product of transposition than perception itself seems to admit.) But since the Renaissance, we have shifted more openly to technology; we press it to its limits and find new sources of transcendence at or beyond the technological boundary. We seek through technological means to generate, to make contact with, a vibrant reality which can be

immediately registered on our pulses. Stretching and extending technological means, we reach through them toward as yet unmastered forces, and we often come upon those forces sooner than we expect--in the very laws and tissues of technology itself. And in this process we create and wear out forms of transcendence at a much faster rate of change than could occur under the rule of the traditional attitude.

In these pages, I have tried to set out in a very rough and general manner the elements of a theory of culture change generated from the interplay of the three basic notions of transcendence, transposition and technology. I want to conclude by summarizing the dynamics of this sequence in two ways: first, compressing the above discussion into what may be called general axioms of culture change; and second, compressing the dynamics of the traditional and modern attitudes into two paradoxes of creation. 1) The four axioms of culture change form a causally related chain which profiles the dynamics of a model applicable to the history of western culture: A. Transposition creates transcendence. B. In early phases of the sequence, transcendence generates technology. C. In later phases of the sequence, technology jeopardizes the transcendences produced by earlier transpositions. D. In still later phases of the sequence, technology tends to replace transposition (at first covertly, then openly) as the source of significant transcendent experience.

2) The two paradoxes of creation: A) The traditional attitude may be indirectly defined, and its dynamics expressed by the following paradox: The creature becomes the creator of the creation in which he is a creature; but he retains this power only on condition that he continue to think of himself as creature, not creator. For example, think of the ways in which man has created (and continues to create) what he sees as the laws and order of nature, the perceptual structure of the experienced world, and the forms of kinship or social organization. Think of the spirits, gods, and other presences with which man has peopled the universe. Think of the ways in which man has made himself creator of the Creator of Creation. And consider whether man can believe or could have believed in the reality of all these creations if he knew or thought that he had created them. For the traditional attitude, the first criterion of reality is transcendence of origin, and so I call this the paradox of transcendence.

B) The character and dynamics of the modern attitude may be expressed by the following paradox: The creator becomes the creature of the creation he has created; and this happens because he continues to think of himself as creator, not creature, as master and not servant of his creation. For example, think of technology, machines, factory systems, economic systems, social systems, political systems, mathematical and logical systems, religious and philosophical systems. Think of how much man has consciously created, and of how little most men at any moment control. This is the paradox of technology.

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The foregoing outline has been excessively condensed and yet, in spite of that, it has omitted so much that its internal coherence as well as its bearing on interdisciplinary study may be far from clear. By way of mitigation and conclusion I can't do much more than restate the objectives set forth at the beginning of the outline, and hope that questions and criticism will elicit further clarification. The theory confronts the pressing problem of integrating specialized and general education without dissolving the necessary differences of subject, methods, and goals that distinguish the special disciplines. The aim of the theory is to generate a pedagogical atmosphere in which various disciplinary perspectives will be called into play almost at random--depending on the particular topic being explored in any phase or moment of cultural sequence. Particular disciplinary "skills" are, so to speak, learned by doing, while attention is focused on the general field of inquiry. Subsequently, and retrospectively, these disciplinary perspectives may be defined and articulated. This, at any rate, is the practical intention that informs the theory.

The theoretical focus on man the creator, along with the basic terms and axioms which elaborate it into a historico-cultural model, have a particular objective. Their goal is concrete interpretation. My own training is in literature, and the approaches to literary interpretation provide the obvious paradigm. But my hope is that the general model will provide a coherent common ground for various disciplinary modes of interpretation. Interpretation--historical, literary, political, institutional, etc.--is the goal toward which the general theory is oriented and in which it is fulfilled. The "objects" of interpretation are the works of man understood in the broad sense demanded by the theory. They include the products of nonconscious as well as conscious process, of collective as well as individual creation. They include, therefore, the subject matter of some branches of scientific inquiry and most branches of those disciplines conventionally grouped as social sciences and humanities. The theory adds to the interpretive project an important restriction: that an understanding of the level of cultural awareness or self-consciousness vis à vis man's creative power is an important element of any interpretive act. This awareness is considered primarily as a function of the level of technology which any culture has achieved, and it is an evaluative awareness--i.e., it may view human creativity as in itself a good or a bad thing--which both affects and is reflected by the style of the manmade works of the time. This means that substantive analyses of style similar to those common in literary study are to be extended as far as possible across the spectrum of disciplines. And it means, finally, that general categories of cultural style and period style (e.g. Archaic, sub-antique, Romanesque, Gothic, Baroque, Romantic) will have to be revised at least to the extent of being rationally extrapolated from the dynamic historical interplay of the theory's basic terms and axioms.